

IN THE ABSTRACT:

Please replace the Abstract of the Disclosure at page 28 of the application with the following:

ABSTRACT

Medical image data such as image data produced by an endoscope system and stored in a mass storage device that is installed in a medical institution are backed up in a backup server over the Internet. The backup server is managed by a service provider, according to a contract made by a service receiver with the service provider. Moreover, the service receiver makes a contract with the service provider by accessing a web server owned by the service provider at an endoscope server system or a personal computer connected to the Internet.

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph at page 2, lines 13 to 23 with the following:

By the way, this kind of image data in general is large in size. Despite the advancement of data compression technology, the amount of data keeps on increasing these days. Therefore the amount of image information that can be stored on the premises of a medical institution has a limit. Moreover, generally speaking, there is a fear that stored

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data may be lost due to an unforeseen happening. Thus, a plurality of backup facilities must be installed in the institution. This invites an increase in costs. Besides, the conventional data management cannot be said to be perfect.

Please replace the paragraph at page 2, line 24 to page 3, line 5 with the following:

On the other hand, the aforesaid well-known image data use form for the construction of a system for storing (recording) and managing image information in a predetermined server over the Internet has an inconvenience in that it requires dedicated software to present recorded images when downloaded. Consequently, image data can be utilized only in a complicated manner.

Please replace the paragraph at page 11, lines 13 to 25 with the following:

A potential user accesses the web server 110 at a terminal (a terminal device in which a typical browser runs, for example, a personal computer) connected to the Internet 1, such as, the endoscope server system 13 (#1). The potential user having accessed the web server 110 selects any of various backup modes offered by a service provider,

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and makes a contract with the service provider (#2). The contract is made using any of various methods that utilize networks (the Internet), wherein the methods include existing methods and methods to be devised in the future. The details of the methods have no direct relation to the present invention, and the description of the methods is therefore omitted.

Please replace the paragraph at page 15, lines 14 to 22 with the following:

As mentioned above, the medical data preservation system of the present embodiment automatically and inexpensively preserves a backup copy of medical data, which is acquired at a medical institution, in compliance with a user's need (or a need of a person concerned in a medical institution) over a communication line established outside the medical institution such as the Internet. Consequently, a large amount of valuable data such as medical data can be surely kept.

Please replace the paragraph at page 18, lines 14 to 15 with the following:

Next, examples of the aforesaid system for use as a medical data preservation system will be described below.